Johannis Barthard Liber

Faith at Work.

A
Brief and Plain

ESSAY,

Upon certain Articles of the Gospel most Necessary to be understood by every Christian : *to wit,*

The NATURE, the ORDER, and the NECESSITY
OF THE
GOOD WORKS,

by which
The *FAITH* of a Christian is to be Evidenced.

Qui scit inter Legem, et Evangelium distinguere gratias agat Deo, et Sciat se esse Theologum.
Luther.

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Some *Right Thoughts*, in an ESSAY, upon **Good Works.**

James 2. 20.

Wilt thou know, O vain man, That Faith without Works is Dead?

THAT Great Preacher of the Gospel and *Insatiable Admirer of the Lord Jesus Christ*, our Apostle *Paul*, in all his Writings, but especially in the Epistle which he wrote unto the *Romans*, [which was by *Melancthon* well called, *The Protestants Confession of Faith*,] as well as his Epistle to the *Galatians*, does abundantly maintain this Article of our *Faith, That a man is not Justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ.* **Justifying Faith** is a Receiving of, and a Relying on, the *Gift of Righteousness* from God, by our Lord Jesus Christ; or, the Consent of a Distressed Soul to be *Justified*, by Gods *Graciously Imputing* unto him, the *Obedience* which the Lord Jesus Christ, as our *Surety*, yielded unto God, on the behalf of His Elect. This **Faith** doth *Justify* a Sinner, not *as* it is a *Work*; but *Organically* & *Relatively*; Inasmuch as it is the *Instrument*, by which a man apprehends the *Righteousness* of the Lord Jesus Christ, as freely Tendred unto the Sinner in the

Gospel; Tis only in this Regard, that *Faith*, & no *Grace*, but *this Faith*, ha's the Honour to *Justify* us. This is the *Good old way*, of arriving unto *Rest*; and, *Aliter qui Vadit, cadit.*

But every *Jewel* ha's a *Counterfeit*. And, *How shall a man know, that his Faith in the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, for his Justification, is not a Counterfeit?*

To answer that Case, the Blessed Apostle *James*, under the *Inspirations of the Almighty*, declares unto us, the **Marks** of a *Justifying Faith*; and those *Marks* are, the **Works** which it perpetually disposes the Believer unto.

Now among the Admonitions of the Apostle to this purpose, there is a special Remark due to that, **Wilt thou know, O vain man, that Faith without works is Dead?**

The Reader will presently observe in this Remarkable passage; both the Character of the *Faith*, which does not produce and promote *Good Works* in the *man* that hath it: It is a *Dead Faith*; it will be of no use unto the man in whom it is; it can do nothing for him: and then, the Character of the *Man* who ha's this *Faith*; He is a *vain man*; he seems, and he boasts, to *have*, what he hath not; and he flatters himself with *Hopes* that never shall be made Good unto him. So that, we are now Assured, **A Worthless Faith is a Worthless Faith.**

Paul, who Professedly handles the Doctrine of *Justification*, does plainly affert, That no man living

living is *Justified* by *Works*, but a man is *Justifyed* only by *Faith*. *James* does nevertheless assert, That a man is *Justified* by *Works*, and a man is not *Justified* by *Faith* only. And yet, however some of the Ancients, as well as *Luther*, stumbled at this *Appearance of Contradiction*, the Assertions do not Contradict one another at all. *Paul* treats of our *Justification* before *God*, and the Right unto Everlasting Life, therein granted unto us, which is only by *Faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ. *James* treats of that which may manifest our *Justification* unto *men*, that See & Hear, our Profession of our *Faith*; and here *Works* are significant. The *Conscience* of a man, may be distressed with a two-fold *Accusation*.

First, A man may be Accused of *Iniquity*; It may be said, *Thou hast broken the Law, and thereby wronged the Name, of God, and the terrible penalty of that Law, now belongs unto thee.* The Answer to this *Accusation* is to be, *My Lord Jesus Christ has fully obey'd the will of God, and suffered the penalty due to me for my Disobedience; and I do by Faith depend on this Righteousness of my Lord Jesus Christ, for my Acceptance with God for ever.*

Secondly, A man may be Accused of *Hypocrisy*. It may be said, *Thou Talkest of thy Faith; but is it not meer Talk? How canst thou prove, that thy Faith is any more, than what is in the very Devils themselves?* The Answer to this *Accusation* is, *The works of a Sanctified man, which I am doing every Day, are the Proof of my Faith.* According hereunto it is affo-

by *Paul*, That a man is *Justified alone by Faith*: but it is asserted by *James*, That a man is *not Justified by a Faith which is alone*. The Question discourſed by *Paul* is, *How a Guilty Perſon may come to be Acquitted by the Lord, from all the Guilt that lies upon him?* The Anſwer to this Queſtion, is, Not by any *Works* of our own, but only by the *Righteouſneſs* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is, on our part, only by *Faith* applied unto us. The Queſtion diſcourſed by *James*, is, *Whether a man pretending to Faith in the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall be ſaved, though he continue without the works of an Holy Life, agreeable thereunto?* The Anſwer to this Queſtion is, *No*, Such a man ha's no *Saving Faith* at all. And that *James* is to be taken in that ſenſe, is evident from This: He does inſiſt upon the Inſtance of *Abraham*; and yet *Abraham* was a *Juſtified man*, Thirty years, before thoſe *Works*, which are ſaid here to *Juſtify* him. Upon the whole then, we ſee *Paul* and *James*, Reconciled, or, indeed, never contrdicting. And we are Reconciled after all; Tis a *Vanity* in any man to *Profeſs*, that he ha's a *True Faith* in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, if his *Faith* be not *Fruitful* in thoſe *Good Works*, which may *Juſtify* the mans *Profeſſion*.

There are Two very Important *Caſes*, about which the Thoughts of every Chriſtian, cannot but be Exerciſed; and we will here beſtow ſome of our Thoughts thereupon.

The firſt *Caſe* which a Chriſtian muſt Conſider, if he would be a *Chriſtian*, is,

What are those **Good Works**, *which a True Faith will Quicken & Incline the Believer unto?*

Now we may thus conceive of them; **Good Works**, are *Sincere Essayes* to observe the *Law of God*. Our God hath given us a *Rule of Life*, in that which we call, *The Moral Law*. None of our *Works* are *Perfectly Good*, if in any point they fall short of that *Rule*. But none of our *Works* do *Perfectly* come up to the *Rule*, as long as we are lodg'd in *this Body which is to Dy*. The *Best men* alive, when they look upon the *Best Works* of their Lives, may cry out, with one of the Ancients, *Terret me tota vita mea, nam apparet mihi, aut Peccatum, aut tota Sterilitas*; The *Sinfulness*, and *Barrenness*, of all my *Life*, strikes me with a *Deadly Terror* of Soul! Nevertheless, there are *Sincere Essays* towards *Perfection*, which all Believers are Conscientiously making every Day. Now these *Essayes* are *Good*, in the Merciful Reckoning of God, our *Father* in our Lord Jesus Christ. Tho' none of our *Sincere Essayes* at *Well-doing* are such *Good works* as to *Justify* us, before that Thrice *Holy God*, who is of *Purer eyes than to behold Evil*, & whose *Pure Eyes* yet *behold* in our *Good Works*, a world of *Evil*: Yet our *Sincere Essayes* are pleasing unto our God, who by His Good *Spirit* ha's Excited them, & Assisted them; and, *Whose workmanship we are, Created in Christ Jesus unto Good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.* Such Good *Works*, as our *Prayers*, are, as tis said, in Prov. 15.

The Delight of the Lord; and such Good *Works*, as our *Alms*, are, as tis said, in Heb. 13. 16. *The Sacrifices where with God is well pleased.*

But now, to speak strictly, **Good Works** must have these Four Ingredients to render them *such.*

First; The **Matter** of our *Works* must be, according to the *Law* of God, or, His *Will* Revealed in His *Word.* The Prophet could say, in Mic. 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, the thing that is Good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to Do Justice, and to Love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God.* *Good Works* must be such, as the Lord hath *shewn* to us, that He hath *Required* of us. They are no *Good Works*, whereof our God may say, *Who hath required 'em?* Works of *Piety*, are *Good Works*; for we have the *Word* of our God for them; as in Psal. 92. 1. *It is a Good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord.* Works of *Charity* are *Good Works*; for we have the *word* of our God for them; as in Heb. 13. 16. *To Do Good, and to Communicate, forget not.* No works are *Good*, but such as are contained in the *Two Tables* of the *Ten Commandments*; the Commandments of *Love* to *God*, and of *Love* to *Man.*

But unto the Constitution of *Good Works*, it is not enough, that the *matter* of what we do, be according to the *Law* of God. Men may do *Works* that shall be *Good* for the *matter* of them, and yet, *Every work of their Hands be unclean, with the Lord. Plowing* is Lawful, and *Praying* is

is Lawful; and yet these *works* may be sinful in the Doer of them. Wherefore,

Secondly, The **Manner** of our *Works*, must be Right, as well as the *Matter* of them. A man may incur the Wrath of God, by his *Good Works*, if he do them not in any *manner* according to the *Law*, as they should be done. We find, in 1 Chron. 15. 13. *The Lord our God* is offended at those who *Seek Him not after the due Order*. No meer *External Actions* are to be Esteemed *Good Works*; there must *Internal Cautions* go along with them; else they are but the *matter* of *Good Works*, without the *Form*. *Good Works* must be done with *Regular Circumstances*, if they would be called, *Good*.

Thirdly, The **Design** of our *Works* must be Right, as well as the *manner* of them. The *Design* which the *Law* of God has assigned for our *Good Works*, is, That the Great God, may be acknowledged, and magnified, and glorified: And the *Gospel* of God, coming in, has assigned a further *Design* for them; namely, To express our *Gratitude* unto our Lord-Redeemer, for His Redeeming of us. Thus 'tis Enjoined, in 1 *Cor.* 10. 30. *Whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.* An *Evil Intention* will utterly spoil any *Good Works*, tho' they were otherwise never so *Good*. And a meerly *Selfish Intention* is an *Evil* one. *Good Works* must all be done, with an Eye, to the *Honour* of God, and the *Service* of Christ, before any *Temporal Advantage* to *Self*: else the

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Best Sacrifices are but an *Abomination.*

Fourthly, *Good Works* must proceed from a *Good* **Principle**; or otherwise they will have no *Real Goodness* in them. Waters that flow from a bitter and a poison'd *Fountain*, can't be *Good.* A *Good Heart*, Like a *Good Fountain*, must be the *Principle*, from whence *Good Works* are to flow. We are told, in Mat. 12. 35. *A Good man, out of the Good Treasure of the Heart, bringeth forth Good Things.* A *Good Principle* within, is a *Good Treasure of the Heart. Works* done meerly from a Principle of *Slavish Fear*, or *Fleshly Love*, are not *Good*, tho' they be never so *Good.* There must be a *Principle* of *Respect unto God in Christ*, wooing us unto all our *Good Works*, or else they are *Stark Naught.* Yea, the *Spirit* of our Lord Jesus Christ, must be in us, as a *Vital Principle*, for our *Good Works*, or else they are *Dead Works*, every one of them. Hence, no *Good Works* were ever done by any one *Unregenerate* man, since the World began; for every *Unregenerate* man is destitute of the *Principle*, which is to be acted in them: the most *Splendid Works* of the Unregenerate, are but (as *Austin* call'd them) *Splendid Sins* before the Lord.

And now there is a Second *Case* which a Christian has to consider, that so he may be stirred up, and helped on, to do those *Good Works* by which he may approve himself indeed a Christian.

Where Lies the Neceſſity *of Good Works, in a Juſtified Belsever, to Juſtifie the Faith, which he is a Profeſſor of?*

Now we do know this; That our *Good Works* are not *Antecedently* neceſſary unto our *Juſtification* before the God of Heaven. For *Good Works* cannot be done by any man, *until* he be *Juſtified*. Until a man be *United* unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is our *Life*, he is a *Dead man*: and what *Good Works* can a *Dead man* do? This is a thing *Livelily* Preached unto us, by our Lord Himſelf, in the fifteenth Chapter of *John*; *The mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.* Hence that common ſaying of *Auſtin*, *Bona Opera ſequuntur Juſtificatum, non præcedunt Juſtificandum.* No, nor is *Faith* it ſelf, *As* doing of *Good Works*, that which Entitles us unto the *Righteouſneſs* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for our *Juſtification*; 'Tis *Faith*, only *As* it Layes Hold on the *Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for the chief of Sinners*, that *Juſtifies* us; And until this be done, we cannot be carried forth unto any *Good Works* at all.

But then, *Good Works*, are *conſequently* neceſſary upon our *Juſtification*. 'Tis indeed ſaid, That *God Juſtifies the Ungodly*; but then, He does not Leave them *Ungodly* when He hath *Juſtified* them. Well, And where Lies the *Neceſſity*? Truly, if we would not be *vain men*, we muſt *Know* ſuch Things as theſe.

First, *Wilt thou know, O man?* That it is in the very **Nature** of a **Juſtifying Faith**, to put a man upon the Doing of *Good Works*. *Faith* is a *Purifier* of the *Heart*: [Acts 15. 9.] and ſo, it cannot but be a *Purifier* of the *Life*. The ſame *Faith*, which Embraces the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as a *Prieſt*, for *Atonement*, (and *As* doing this, it *Juſtifies!*) Embraces Him alſo, as a *Prophet*, & as a *King*: Now this *Prophet* will *Inſtruct*, & this *King* will *Injoin*, our doing of *Good Works* for ever. A *Juſtifying Faith*, Receives Chriſt the *Sacrificer*, and the *Interceſſor*; and in that Notion, it *Juſtifies*: But is this all? No, it alſo, according to Col. 2. 6. *Receives Chriſt the Lord*. Now *Good Works* are by that *Lord* Required. 'Tis no *True Faith*, which any man hath, if it be not for a *whole Chriſt*. The Devil ſaid unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *What have we to do with thee, Thou Holy One?* If a man would be concerned with our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, only as a *Merciful* One, and a *Gracious* One, and not likewiſe as an *Holy* One, that man has no more *Faith* than a *Devil*! *Juſtifying Faith* is a *Tree*, which cannot but have the *Good Fruits* of *Good Works* growing upon it. It is the *Holy Spirit* of God, that *Creates*, and that *Beſtows*, a *Juſtifying Faith*, wherever it is; and that *Holy Spirit* cannot ſuffer any Soul, in which He dwells, to be wholly Remiſs about the *Good Works* which are agreeable unto His *Holineſs*.

Briefly; 'Tis in the very *Nature* of a *Saving*

Faith to be a *Working Faith.* The Scriptures of Truth, aſſure us, in Gal. 5. 6. *Faith works, by Love.* It was well ſaid, therefore by *John Hus, Ubi Bona Opera non apparent ad extra, ibi Fides non eſt ad intra*: *Faith* is not *within*, if *Good VVorks* are not *without.* *Faith* muſt become *viſible*, and (as hath been ſometimes ſaid) *Incarnate*, by *Good VVorks* upon it.

Again; *Wilt thou know, O man?* That *Good works* are no *Small part* of the **Great Salvation**, which is the Hope and claim of all the *Juſtified.* Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath *Redeemed* us by His Blood; What for? We are informed, in Tit. 2. 14. *To purify unto Himſelf, a peculiar People, zealous of Good works.* The following words, *Let no man deſpiſe thee, Calvin* thinks them ſpoken to the *People*, becauſe *People* often don't care to Hear of this; but it is a Thing to be *ſpoken with all Authority.* A main Thing, Bought for us by the *Righteouſneſs* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is, that we may be made Happy, by our Enjoying a *Reſemblance* of that *Righteouſneſs*, in our own doing of *Good works*, wherein we ſhall be conformed unto His Exemple. The *Doing of Good works* is one main Thing, in that *Bleſſedneſs*, which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed for us, in His being made a *Curſe* on our behalf: And a man has no True *Faith* in him, until he be thus perſwaded. Very grand is the miſtake of men, about *Salvation*: *Salvation* is not meerly our *Fruition* of the *Good Things* reſerved for us, in the unſeen and futu-

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ture ſtate; but *Salvation* lies alſo in our *Perfo-mance* of *Good works* leading thereunto. Our *Captivity* to the *Devil*, is that from which we are in our *Salvation* reſcued: and that *Captivity* keeps a man from doing of *Good works*. For a man to be ſet at *Liberty* from the *Devil*, and ſo to do thoſe *Good works*, which are contrary to the *Works of the Devil*, This, This is our *Salvation*. A man being made Able and Willing to Do *Good works* like the *Good Angels* of Heaven, This is the *Salvation*, which *Faith* does make out after; Tis the *End of our Faith*, and the *Salvation of our Soul*.

Furthermore; *Wilt thou know, O man?* That the **Commandment** of Heaven hath made *Good works* incumbent on every man on Earth. This true, when we are in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we are not under a *Covenant of works*. Our own doing of *Good works*, is not now, the *Condition* of our *Entering into Life*. But ſtill, the *Covenant of Grace* does not Releaſe us, from all Obligation, to *do* thoſe *Good works*, which once were the Terms of our *Entering into Life*; the Language of it is that in Rom 3. 31. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid: Yea, we Eſtabliſh the Law*. Becauſe we are under the *Covenant of Grace*, are we not ſtill obliged unto all that *Holineſs*, all that *Watchfulneſs*, all that *Exactneſs*, which was demanded in the *Old Covenant*? *God forbid*: Yea, we do ſtill ſo *Eſtabliſh the Law*, that if we fail in any one thing, tis our *Sin*, it ſhould be our *Grief*, it will be our *Shame*; and we muſt, with contri-

Contrition of Heart, make our Confeſſion, *That we come ſhort of our Duty.* Indeed, becauſe we cannot but continually Tranſgreſs, and, *In many things we offend all*, therefore the *New-Covenant* ha's provided a *Remedy* for us: Tis only the *Good works* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt Reputed *Ours*, that cauſe us to *ſtand as without Fault before the Throne of God.* But we muſt own it ſtill, as a *Fault* in us, a *Fault* worthy of Death, whenever we miſs of doing any Thing, that is demanded as a *Duty*, in the *Old Covenant*: There is a *Sin*, in *Every Tranſgreſſion of the Law*; a Sin to be Confeſſed, Bewayled, Abhorred. Yea, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the *Goſpel*, doth, How often? Repeat thoſe Precepts; in Math. 5. 16. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your Good works*: and in Tit. 3. 8. *This is a Faithful ſaying, That they which have Believed in God, ſhould be careful of Good works*: and in 1 Joh. 2. 1. *Theſe Things write I unto you, that ye do not Sin.*

Moreover; *Wilt thou know, O man?* That without *Good works* we are Abominably & Inexcuſably **Ungrateful** unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath done ſo many *kind works* for us? The *Evangelical Reaſon* for our *Good works*, is, That we may ſhow our *Thankfulneſs* unto Him, *Who ha's Loved us, and given Himſelf for us*; unto Him, *Who ha's Loved us, and waſhed away our Sins in His own Blood.* If a man have the leaſt Grain of True *Faith* in him, he will make that Enquiry before our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in Pſal. 116. 12. *What ſhall*

ſhall I render to the Lord, for all His Benefits? Now the Reply that *Faith* makes to this Enquiry, is the ſame that our Lord Himſelf makes; *Let thoſe Good works be done, which may adorn the Doctrine of God the Saviour!* It was argued, in Rom. 12. 1. *I beſeech you Brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your Bodies, a Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable to God, which is your Reaſonable Service.* Even ſo, All the Return, which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt expects from us, for all His *Mercies*, is *That we Devote our ſelves unto the Service of our Lord*: And *Faith* ſays, That this is a Thing infinitely *Reaſonable*. Where *Faith* has been infuſed into the Heart of any man, there is no *Motive* unto *Good VVorks* more powerful than this upon him. If he could think, *I ſhall eſcape Hell, yea I ſhall merit Heaven, by my good works!* This were not ſuch a powerful motive to *good works*, for any *Heart* that has *Faith* in it, as to think, *I ſhall by my good works Glorify my Bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt who has done ſo much for me!* That man has no *Faith* in him, on whom this motive has not a very *conſtraining* operation. For us to be without *good works*, would be an horrible Reproach unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as if He were, *A Patron of* [illegible], and as if He were a *God that had pleaſure in* [illegible]*wickedneſs, and evil might dwell with Him.* Now True *Faith* will never let a man be ſo *wicked* as thus to *Reproach* the Lord. *Fooliſh and Unwiſe* are all they, that thus *Requite the Lord!*

Finally, *VVilt thou know, O man?* That a [illegible] Heart

Heart ſet for the Doing of *Good Works*, is a **Qualification**, and a **Preparation** of them that ſhall *Inherit* the Recompences of *Everlaſting Life*. There is no paſſing into the moſt Holy Heavens, without being, as 'tis expreſſed in Col. 1. 12. *Made meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* All the Partakers of the Heavenly *Inheritance*, are doing of *Good Works* therein for ever; they do nothing but *Good works* there throughout Eternal Ages. Now, except a man have an Heart for *Good works* [in *Converſion*, Mat. 18. 3.] given unto him, he is not *meet* for that *Inheritance*, wherein to there *Enters nothing that ſhall Defile.* The *Good works* which our weekly *Sabbath* is to be fill'd withal, make it very wearisome unto an *Unrenewed* Soul: they ſay, *What a wearineſs is it?* When the Sanctification of the *Lords Day*, was lately Urged upon a grave Ceremonious Clergyman, he reply'd, *What? Would you have a man be upon the Rack, a whole Day together?* Truly, The Eternal *Sabbath*, which our Glorious *Jeſus* carryeth all His People into, Men will be *weary* of it, it will be a *Rack* unto them, they won't be ſuited in it, if they ſhould not have an Heart for *Good works* inſpired into them; none but thoſe that are thus *pure in Heart*, will be fit for the Beatifick *Sight* of the moſt *Holy God.* Our God muſt *work us for that ſelf-ſame thing*, [2 Cor. 5. 5.] or, elſe the *Thing* would be Diſtaſtful unto us: now, 'tis by a *Spirit* for *Good works*, that He does *work* us up hereunto. And He hath

warned us, in Heb. 12. 14. *Without Holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* Tho' we ſhall not go to Heaven *For* our *Good works*, we cannot go to Heaven *without* them.

Now what ſhould be the Reſult of our Thoughts upon theſe Two *Caſes* thus offered, but This?

We are to be adviſed, firſt of all; That we do not Expect, to be *Juſtified* by our *Good works*, or to Do any *Good works* until we are *Juſtified*, in our Believing on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is of no little Importance unto us, That our *Good works* have their due place in our *Divinity*: and many Treatiſes of ſuch *Divinity* as the Engliſh Nation has been of later years Defiled and Abuſed withal, have not only been *Ineffectual* to procure thoſe *Good Works*, which they have pretended for, but alſo been really *prejudicial* thereunto, for their want of This. We muſt Beware how we go to patch up a *Righteouſneſs* of our own, out of thoſe *Good works* whereto God may Enable us, or do like them, who in Rom. 10 3. *Being ignorant of Gods Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the Righteouſneſs of God.* There is not a more [illegible] *Rock* for the Shipwrack of a Soul, than this [illegible] Sinners are *Awakened*, with the Appre[illegible]ſions of the Divine Vengeance purſuing o[illegible]m, for their Sins, this is the *Firſt Thing* tha[illegible] uſually betake themſelves unto: They fl[illegible] *Firſt* unto the *Good Works* of a *Reformation* i[illegible]r faulty Lives. No, O *vain man*; *Wilt tho[illegible]*

Know

Know? Thy *First Flight* should be unto the Lord Jesus Christ, for His *Righteousness* to be conferred upon the most Loathsome Sinner out of Hell; and that thou mayst, *Be found in Him, not having thy own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith* 'Tis a *vain* Imagination that thou mayst not Believe on the *Righteousness* of the Lord Jesus Christ, for thy *Justification*, until by doing of *Good works* thou art made *Fit* for the *Imputation* of that *Righteousness*. Many say, indeed they would Lay Hold on the Lord Jesus Christ, and on His Righteousness, but they *dare not*, because they are *not Fit for Him*. Alas, this also is but another and a finer strain, to set up our own *Righteousness*. How, *Not Fit?* The wretched circumstances of thy Soul, that make thee say, *Not Fit*, are thy very *Fitness*. We must come to our Lord Jesus Christ *For* those things, which the prepostrous Hearts of men would come unto Him, *With*. It is an Error for men to venture their Everlasting Interest upon the Lord Jesus Christ, under this Encouragement, *That they have attained unto such and such Godly Dispositions, as will Recommend us unto Him*; We must go to Him, and His *Righteousness*, and venture to cast our selves upon it, as *Recommended* by nothing, but our own Horrible *misery*, thereunto. Certainly, It will never make *Sincere Converts*, to talk of *Rapping off mens Fingers from catching Hold of Christ, before they are fit for Him*. 'Tis our

Catching Hold of Him, that muſt make us *Fit for Him*, and for every *Good work!* We ſhall do *Good Works* when we have come utterly without *them*, unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, firſt, for a ſhare in the *Righteouſneſs* of the *Good Works* which *He* did for us, and then, for the Aſſiſtance to Do *Good Works* our ſelves, in a meaſure Like unto them. Well, and when we have Done our *Good Works*, we muſt after all, Remember this, That we are to *Renounce* them all; Renounce all *Dependence* on them for the purchaſe of the Divine Favour unto us. When ſome told our Dying *Herbert*, the many *Good works* which he had been doing in his Life, he only ſaid, *Good Works, if ſprinkled with the Blood of Chriſt!* It is the *Blood of Chriſt*, and not our *Good works*, that muſt be of any value with us. They that Build their *Faith* on their *Good works*, Build on a *Sandy Foundation*: The *Primitive Chriſtians* were ſound in this Article; (*Juſtin Martyr* will clear it:) That we are Juſtified only by a wonderful *Commutation* between our Lord and us, *He* taking our *Guiltineſs*, and *we* having His *Righteouſneſs*: 'Tis well declared by *Cyprian*, *Non aſpernatur Filius carnem Hominis induere, ut cum peccare non poſſet, aliena peccata portaret. Immortalitate derim poſita, fieri ſe mortalem patitur, ut Innocentium pro Nocentium Salute Perimatur*: 'Tis well declared by *Theodoret*, who Expounding that paſſage in the Pſalms, *I reſtored that which I took not away*, applies it unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *q. d.*

Others

Others robbed God of His Glory, but I (ſays our Lord) *have reſtored it again; the Sins by which 'twas done, they were mine by Imputation, tho' never mine by Inhærency.* The *Proteſtant Reformers* were ſo full in this Article, That they did not ſcruple to ſay, *Amiſſo Articulo Juſtificationis, ſimul amiſſa eſt tota Doctrina Chriſtiana*; and as they Liv'd and Dy'd in the Judgment of that Martyr, whoſe Expiring words, were, *Behold, a marvellous Exchange, my Lord has my Guiltineſs, and I have His Righteouſneſs!* thus, they have generally ever ſince been clear in it, until ſome of Late, have darkened the Truth, under pretence of preſerving the Intereſts of *Holineſs*; Albeit, as our Incomparable *Owen*, ſays, *I am not ſatisfied, that any of thoſe, who at preſent oppoſe this Doctrine, do in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and the Exerciſe of all Chriſtian Graces, ſurpaſs thoſe who in the Laſt Ages, both in this and other Nations, firmly adhæred unto it.* Yea, ſome of the *Papiſts* themſelves, have been under ſuch *Convictions*, as have compelled them to Subſcribe unto this Article; eſpecially, when the Approaches of *Death*, have given them with a *Lively Senſe* to feel themſelves going to appear before the Judgment-Seat of God. *Erneſtus*, the Arch-biſhop of *Magdeburgh*, when he was near his Death, was comforted by a Minorite, who told him, *That the merit of his Good works, would make ſure a place in Heaven for him*; whereupon the Dying man cryed out, *Nullo modo*, I will *by no means truſt unto the merit of any*

Good

Good works, done by any man whatever, but the Good works of Chriſt are ſufficient for me! *Bellarmine* himſelf, who had Lived ſo Blameleſly, that he was not conſcious of his ever having once told a *Lye*, and when he came to *Auricular Confeſſion* he could find nothing to mention, without Looking back ſo far as his Childhood, yet when his Death was arreſting him, he durſt no more truſt unto the merit of his *Good works*, but would have that clauſe inſerted in his Will, That he deſired the Lord to Receive him, *Non ut æſtimator meriti, ſed ut Largitor veniæ*; Not on *Merit*, but in *Mercy!*

But we are in the next place to be Adviſed That having firſt *Believed* on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that we may be *Juſtified*, we do then A bound in thoſe *Good works*, which are the proper and Genuine Symptoms of *Believers*; thoſe *Good works*, which the Oracles of Heaven call *The Fruits of Righteouſneſs*. We ſhould, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Always abound* in *the work of the Lord*. The Bible has no *Good work* any where, for thoſe *Antinomian* Wretches, with whom *Good works* are deſpiſed & neglected: ſpits nothing but Sulphureous Fire, in the Faces of thoſe *Libertines*! If we are deſtitute of *Good works*, we have none but a *Dead Faith*, and a *Dead Faith* will very little befriend a *Dead Soul*. To have no *Good works* then, is a woful Thing: and, the Præmonition is, in Math. 3. 10. *Every Tree which bringeth not forth Good Fruit, is hewn down, & caſt into the Fire*: What then will be the Wo, how

ful will be the Doom of thoſe that are full of *Evil works*, and bring forth much of that *Evil Fruit*, which grows on the *Vine of Sodom, & in the Field of Gomorrah*? Sad will it be for us to periſh among *Unbelievers*, after we have ſeemed mightily to *Believe*; & after a fair ſhow of our *Faith*, to be Damn'd among, *The workers of Iniquity*. Surely, If we would with the *Joy of Faith*, be Satisfied, that the *Seal of the Holy Spirit*, which we ſeem to have, when we Entertain our Aſſurance, *That the Righteouſneſs of God, which is by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt is upon us*, is not a Cheat, a Sham, a Self-deluding *Enthuſiaſm*, it becomes us, with a Conſtant *Zeal* for *Good works*, to *Exerciſe our ſelves, at keeping a Conſcience void of Offence towards God and man*. It becomes us, to Ponder, How much we *Owe* unto our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Study, How to *Serve* the Lord that has *Bought* us; & with *Good works* alwayes to be at work for Him. It becomes us, to forethink, How little Time we have to be *Working* in, how near we are to the Time where there can be no *Working*, and to Do as many *Good works*, as we can in our Time; yea, to call our ſelves unto a *Daily Account*, with unſpeakable Trouble, if we have let one Day paſs without many of them. It becomes us even to raiſe our *Civil* and *Natural*, as well as *Religious works*, unto the Dignity of *Good works*, by the moſt Frequent, moſt Explicit, & moſt Ennobling *Dedications* of all our *Works*, unto the Lord. So, it will not be long before we *reſt from our Labours*, but *our Works will follow us*.

1462